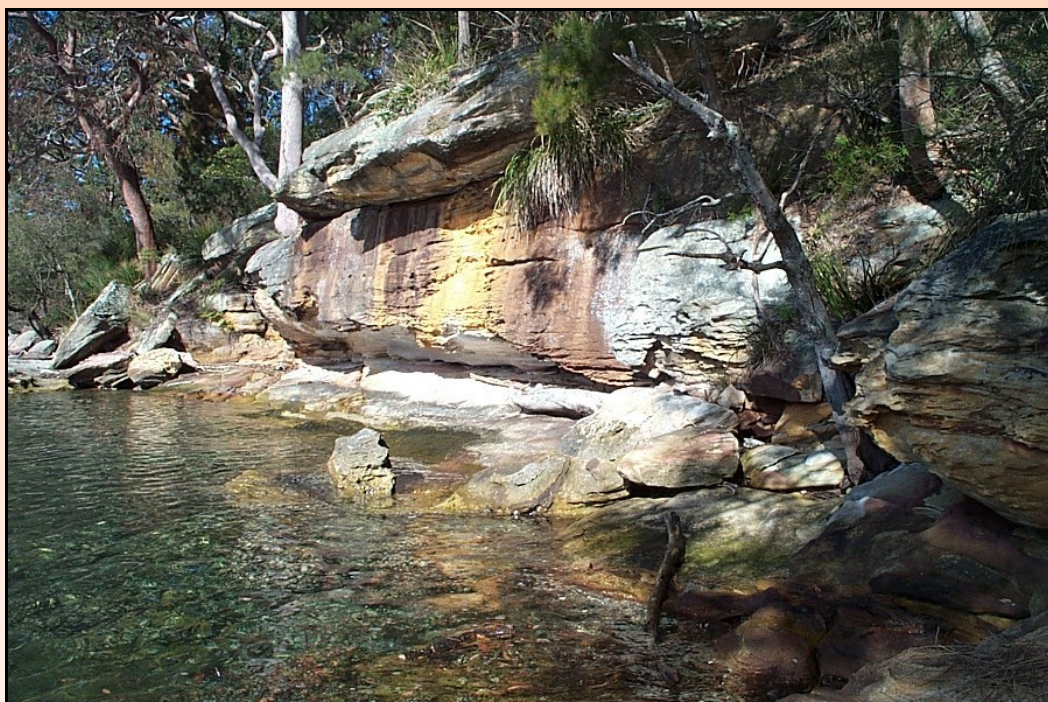




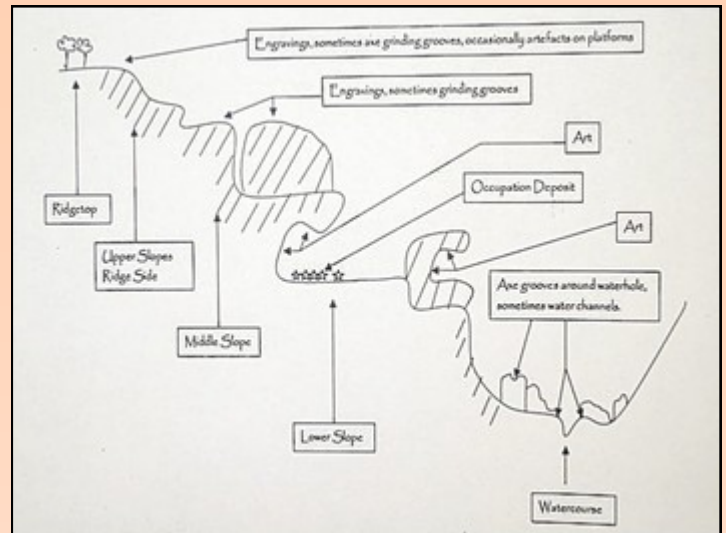
Aboriginal Sites Awareness



The Sydney Basin is one of the richest provinces in Australia in terms of Aboriginal archaeological sites. There are approximately 4,500 sites registered by the Office of Environment and Heritage. This brochure provides you with the basic information required to identify the most common sites located in your local area, or even your backyard.

Potential Site Areas

This diagram is an idealised sandstone landscape in cross section with the location of common features and the types of sites which they are associated. Ridge tops and ridge sides have high potential for engravings. Middle and lower slopes, with clifflines or isolated boulders have high potential for shelters with occupation deposit and art. Lower slopes and water courses have high potential for axe grinding grooves.



Rock Engraving (Below)

Engravings were made by drilling a series of holes, which were then connected to form a line. In the local area, designs include fish, animals, humans, wooden artifacts and mythological beings.

Axe Grinding Grooves (Above)

The grinding grooves are made from Aboriginal people sharpening their stone axe heads. The axes were constructed from hard volcanic stone fastened to a wooden handle. To sharpen the axe, water is put on to the wet rock and the axe is rubbed backwards and forward until the stone is sharp. The water is used to clean and cool the stone as friction from the rubbing generates heat. The action of sharpening leaves these grooves





Other Sites Include:

Open Camp Sites: predominately artefact scatters, such as stone tools used for working, food preparation etc.

Isolated Find: A single stone artefact. The isolated find can be a flaked stone, core or any finished implement.

Bora or Ceremonial Ground: A ceremonial place where initiation ceremonies are performed and are often meeting places as well. A bora ground most commonly consists of two circles marked by raised earth banks, and connected by a pathway.

Burial: Burials are found where soft sediments are located e.g. sand or silty material. A number of burials have been found in middens and within shelters.

Scarred Tree: Trees with evidence of bark and wood being removed to make shields, shelters, coolamons and canoes.

Carved Tree: Carved trees have complex patterns cut into the tree that may have important ceremonial meaning.

Fish Trap: Rocks placed side by side to form an enclosed space in water – when the tide is high, fish swim into these pools and are trapped when the tide lowers.

Stone Arrangement: Areas where stones are placed in a certain way to form circles, semi-circles, lines and routes. Sometimes they identified ceremonial grounds and tribal boundaries, as well as other sorts of ownership boundaries.

Art Work (Right) This is a photograph of an example of Hand Stencils. Stencils are produced by mixing ochre in the mouth into a wet paste, then spraying it over the hand. Other objects used for stenciling include human and animal feet, boomerangs, axes, woomeras, kangaroo tails and shields. The most common natural substances used for creating Aboriginal Art work include red and yellow ochre, white pipeclay, gypsum and charcoal.

Midden (Right) A midden is a place where remains from eating shellfish have accumulated. Rock oyster and Sydney cockle were the main types of shell eaten in Sydney Harbour. Apart from shells, other objects have been found in middens such as human bones, animal bones, artefacts and tools made from stone, shell or bone.



Rock shelter with Deposit (Right)
In this area sandstone is the rock from which rockshelters are formed.

Shelters are found in overhangs that form hollows, which allow good protection from the elements. The deposit which provides evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the shelter may include midden material, fire places, tools and sometimes burials.